

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus, comprising:
 - a body having a first end and a second end;
 - an input aperture defined proximate the first end of the body;
 - an output aperture defined proximate to the second end of the body and spaced apart from the input aperture;
 - a passage disposed in said body and extending from said input aperture to said output aperture;
 - at least one member disposed in said passage, the member being configured to redirect a movement of an object;
 - a sensory output generator; and
 - an actuator coupled to said sensory output generator, disposed to detect movement of an object through said passage, and configured to provide an input to said sensory output generator upon detecting movement of the object.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the input aperture and output aperture are substantially vertically disposed with respect to one another.
3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the at least one member is configured to redirect the movement of the object as it passes through said passage.
4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus resembles a toy giraffe.
5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the object is a toy block.
6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the sensory output is at least one of a visual and an audible output.

– 11 –

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the actuator is a compression switch.
8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the actuator is located substantially at the output aperture and configured to generate a sensory output when the object exits the output aperture.
9. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
a plurality of viewing apertures defined by said body and communicating with said passage.
10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the actuator is configured to be triggered by engagement by the object.
11. A method, comprising:
receiving an object at an input aperture defined at a first end of a channel;
displacing the object along the channel;
redirecting the object;
receiving the object at an output aperture defined at a second end of the channel, the output aperture being substantially vertically offset from the input aperture; and
generating an output via an output generator when the object is received at the output aperture.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein the receiving the object includes receiving a toy block.
13. The method of claim 11, wherein the displacing the object is caused by a gravitational force.
14. The method of claim 11, wherein the generating an output includes generating a sensory output.

– 12 –

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the output generator generates the output based on engagement of an actuator by the object.
16. The method of claim 15, the actuator being a compression switch, the method further comprising:
 - depressing the compression switch in response to engagement of the actuator by the object.
17. An apparatus, comprising:
 - a guiding structure, the guiding structure having an input and an output, the input spaced from the output;
 - an actuator disposed adjacent to the output; and
 - an output generator coupled to the actuator and configured to generate an output in response to engagement of the actuator by the object.
18. The apparatus of claim 17, the guiding structure being configured to guide an object, the apparatus further comprising:
 - at least one member configured to redirect a path of the object as it is displaced from the input to the output.
19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the object is a toy block.
20. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the output is one of an audible and a visual output.
21. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the actuator is configured to be engaged by the object as it passes through the guiding structure to the output.
22. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the actuator is a compression switch.
23. The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising:

– 13 –

a plurality of viewing apertures defined by the guiding structure and configured to permit viewing of an object as it moves from the input to the output.

24. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the guiding structure resembles a toy giraffe.